



For Immediate Release  
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## **Border Governors Move to Secure Additional Federal Funds, Stem Flow of Illegal Drugs**

### *Border Governors' Letter Seeks Lion's Share of \$25 Million DOD Appropriation*

WASHINGTON – New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger today led an effort to secure as large a share as possible of a \$20 million U.S. Department of Defense appropriation to the National Guard Counter-Drug Program and an additional \$5.2 million specifically directed towards counter-drug efforts along the Southwestern border. The three Governors today wrote to incoming Defense Secretary Robert Gates to request that the new funding be sent to National Guard units in the three states along the US/Mexico border.

“As Border Governors we are on the front lines of the fight against drug smugglers and other illegal activity,” said Governor Richardson. “Since the majority of the illicit drugs that enter the United States pass through the Southwest border, it makes sense that we receive the lion’s share of this anti-drug funding as well.”

“Southwestern states are constantly looking for new ways to combat illegal activity along the international border,” said Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano. “The federal government needs to continue to augment and enhance that effort.”

The Fiscal Year 2007 Department of Defense (DOD) appropriations bill recently signed into law provides \$20 million in new and additional money to the National Guard Counter-Drug Program and an additional \$5.2 million specifically directed towards counter-drug efforts along the Southwestern border. These new, targeted funds are designed to help stem the influx of drug trafficking across the border. It is estimated that 60 percent of the illicit drugs that enter the United States pass through the Southwest border.

To further make their case, the Governors also requested a meeting of relevant personnel from DOD and their offices in the next few weeks.

In August 2005, Governors Richardson and Napolitano declared border emergencies to help local law enforcement officials who are fighting illegal activity. New Mexico's border emergency declaration freed up \$1.75 million for New Mexico border counties and local governments to hire approximately 10 additional law enforcement officers and purchase approximately 10 additional vehicles. These efforts have resulted in increased drug arrests, more undocumented immigrants caught and an approximately 80 percent reduction in crime in the border community of Columbus, New Mexico alone.

The letter is signed by New Mexico Governor Bill Richardson, Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano and California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. A copy of the letter is attached.

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